DEUTSCHE AFRIKA-LINIEN
JOHN T. ESSBERGER

# news

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# Pirates are still active in the Indian Ocean

There have been little news about pirate activities off the coast of Somalia and further out in the Indian Ocean. We asked Dr Dag-Sven Dieckmann, managing director of Indian Ocean Shipping Holdings, which also comprise United Africa Feeder Line (UAFL), about the latest development.

**DAL/JTE NEWS:** Dr Dieckmann, the MEXX service of UAFL operates in the region of the Islands of the Indian Ocean along the coast of East Africa up to Zanzibar and the Persian Gulf. That was a hotspot for pirate activities for many years. Has the situation changed?

**DIECKMANN:** Our three vessels in the MEXX service all sail through the pirate area on a regular basis. So far we have not had any problems with pirates, apart from a fishing boat coming suspiciously close to one of our ships off the Somali coast back in 2012. Since we have professionally armed guards on board, the boat soon sped off. We assume that the pirates are informed which ships have employed armed guards on board and, in fact, the majority of vessels do. As far as I know, there were no pirate attacks whatsoever in 2015, and in 2016 there has only been one incident.

**DAL/JTE NEWS:** Only back in October 2016, the product tanker "CPO Korea" was attacked 330 nautical

*(continued on page 2)*

# Many new faces at the Essberger Night

*New members of the JTE team clockwise: Hauke Hastedt (operator), Elena Grigoleit (broker), Dierk Herrmann (operations manager), Jan Hammer (MD JTE), Jakob Veldhuizen-Dijkstra (junior superintendent), Kai Pahnke (superintendent), Jan van der Form (training captain), Dietrich Wulff (SSHEQ)*

On the occasion of the traditional Essberger Night John T. Essberger's managing director Jan Hammer took the opportunity to present six new members who have joined his team. The famous get-together of Essberger customers and friends from the chemical industry is still rated top among the many events related to the Hamburg Eisbein-Essen of shipbrokers. Jan Hammer also waved goodbye to his able and well-liked predecessor Hugo Finlay, who retired this summer and is now looking forward to a new career as a lawyer for shipping affairs. At the Essberger Night all the guests were personally welcomed by JTE Managing Owners Dr Eberhart von Rantzau and Heinrich von Rantzau.

*(continued on page 3)*

# How nice this message in a bottle

This message in a bottle travelled thousands of miles to finally reach just the right person. After having a bottle of wine at the bar of the "DAL Kalahari" Rainer Schulze-Smidt from Bremen, passenger on board the container ship on her way to Cape Town, tried his luck. He put a message in the empty wine bottle, sealed it and dropped it over board. That was in early November 2010 in a position just off the coast of Cameroon, West Africa. Then he forgot about his bottle. The bottle travelled for almost exactly 14 months and was finally washed ashore near Florianópolis in southern Brazil. The message was found and read by Cristiane "Sonora" Satya, a professional Brazilian photographer taking a morning swim at the local beach, on the last day of the year 2011. She says: "To find a message in a bottle had been my dream since I was a kid. I found this bottle two days before my birthday. What a beautiful present!" For many reasons it took Sonora until mid-July 2015 to get in touch with Rainer. She sent him some images and a warm-hearted e-mail explaining how she discovered the bottle and what she felt at that moment. Interested?

*(Read the letter on page 7)*

*The year 2016 was again dominated by the ongoing global shipping crisis. We are still facing a spectacular folding of companies, unsolved debt problems of many shipowners – and the associated financial institutes – as well as a continuing trend of mergers in the shipping business, as presently experienced with Hamburg Süd.*

*However, our Group of Companies has successfully maintained its position despite this negative environment, which shows we were right to be prudent when making investments and to save in the right places while optimising our service. Although we were able to achieve an overall positive result in 2016, we too have felt the effects of the crisis. The liner service to South Africa is still feeling the pressure on freight rates, but positive signals are being received from our DAL Agency and UAFL, our Indian Ocean service.*

*The year started off well for Essberger Tankers, but then lost momentum as the market weakened. Nonetheless our annual result in the chemical tanker trade was positive and we are optimistic about the year ahead. The bulk carrier trade at Essberger Dry Cargo is still suffering from the ongoing recession of charter rates and remains at a very low level. Essberger Shipmanagement is faced with further challenges in the optimisation of our fleet, especially in view of the new environmental protection regulations coming into effect. Our staff have helped in an effort to strengthen our company and thus enable us to maintain our independence. I thank you all for this, and I wish everyone a happy Christmas and a successful New Year.*

*Yours Eberhart von Rantzau*

# An Ironman takes over DAL Agency

*David McCallum will succeed Ron Frick as managing director of DAL Agency South Africa as of January 2017*

**DAL/JTE NEWS:** David, you joined DAL Agency South Africa in May 2016. What attracted you to the agency?

**DAVID MCCALLUM:** I have 22 years' experience in the logistics industry. For me it is an opportunity to gain experience "closer to the vessel". The current business units which constitute DAL Agency (Pty) Ltd and their respective service offerings is one which, in my opinion, would enable it to further integrate itself into its clients' supply chains.

**DAL/JTE NEWS:** Tell us a little about your past career.

**DAVID MCCALLUM:** After leaving school I joined the army and completed a compulsory year of national service. In 1994, I entered the industry as a management trainee for a transport company which was focused on the distribution of fast-moving consumer goods. I remained with this company for a number of years and held middle-management roles in its transport and warehousing business units. During this time I attended evening lectures and completed a Bachelor of Commerce degree with majors in logistics and marketing. In 2005, I joined Roehlig-Grindrod as the key accounts manager for the Nestlé account; over the next 11 years I held various management roles within the organisation. My interaction with the DAL brand really began when I fulfilled the role of Durban sea-freight branch manager from 2007 to 2011. In 2012, I was offered the role of country managing director in Belgium by Roehlig. In mid-2012, my family and I moved to Antwerp. Later I returned back to Roehlig-Grindrod to become the national seafreight director until I joined DAL Agency.

*David McCallum has 22 years experience in the logistics business – and he is a long-distance runner*

**DAL/JTE NEWS:** What are your future plans with the agency?

**DAVID MCCALLUM:** First and foremost I want to conscientiously protect the culture within the business. Sales activities within the agency are more important than ever. The strategic importance of the sales function will dictate the further development.

**DAL/JTE NEWS:** Where do you see the biggest challenges of operating in South Africa?

**DAVID MCCALLUM:** The high level of volatility in the rate of exchange is certainly one of the major challenges which we are faced with; the impact of this volatility is amplified by the fact that South Africa is a net importer of consumer goods. High levels of inefficiency at our major ports and the lack of competition in this sector certainly present an ongoing set of challenges for all who operate in the international logistics sector. Amendments to the statutory and regulatory frameworks in which businesses operate will have an impact on the business for the foreseeable future. But South Africa is full of positive people with high levels of entrepreneurship and a great sense of humour. This makes me positive about the future of the country and the business environment.

**DAL/JTE NEWS:** Like most South Africans you have a keen interest in sport.

**DAVID MCCALLUM:** I have completed various marathons and ultra-marathons with the longest being the Comrades Marathon – an 89 km marathon between Durban and Pietermaritzburg. Currently I am aiming to participate in a full Ironman competion in April 2017.

# Pirates are not asleep

*(continued from page 1)*

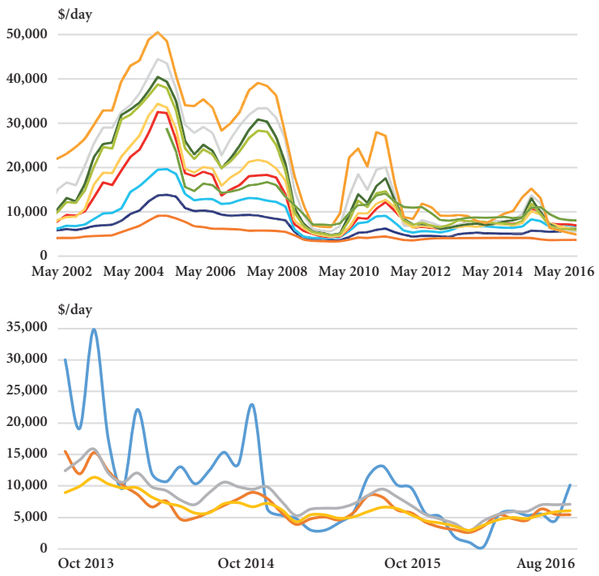
miles off the Somali coast. There was a ten-minute exchange of fire with the armed guards on board the tanker, after which the pirates changed course.

**DIECKMANN:** We heard about this incident, too, and I'm very surprised there are still pirate activities in the region. I thought it was over. But now the windy monsoon season has ended and with the calmer sea pirates can use their small attack-skiffs again. We will continue to monitor the situation. Of course, the armed guards will remain on board.

**DAL/JTE NEWS:** For shipowners, armed guards are a means of providing safety but they also entail huge financial costs.

**DIECKMANN:** Right, because the shipowners bear the costs of armed guards, which mean substantial additional costs that we can't pass on to our customers. Of course the safety of our crews is in our prime interest and we will take no risk.

# Charter rates still down




*Charter rates for feeder container ships (top) and bulk carriers (bottom) are still rock-bottom as shown by our two charts. Essberger Dry Cargo operate container ships of 2200 TEU (light-green line) but in fact earn better charter rates than shown in the statistics. Essberger's 30,000 dwt handysize bulk carrier rates are indicated on the bottom chart with a yellow line. The blue line shows rates for Capesize bulkers of 172,000 dwt*

*During his recent visit to Hamburg HE Phumelele Stone Sizani, Ambassador of the Republic of South Africa to Germany, paid a visit to Dr Eberhart von Rantzau, Honorary Consul of the Republic of South Africa. Ambassador Sizani was invited to a dinner at the Weißes Haus for an informal exchange of information on the latest developments in South Africa. Ambassador Sizani, who arrived in Berlin only two months ago, is a former Chief Whip of the ANC in Parliament*



# Essberger Night – a success story

*Managing Owners Dr Eberhart and Heinrich von Rantzau played host to a record number of guests at the Old Customs House*

*The hosts of the Essberger Night: Essberger Tankers' chartering manager Henrik Althoff, John T Essberger's new managing director Jan Hammer and Managing Owners Dr Eberhart von Rantzau and Heinrich von Rantzau (left to right)*

*Ms Silke Bradler and Ms Caren Braemer representing the Helm Group*

*Mr Sigmund Aarnes (C. M. Olsen) with Mr Paolo Olivari (Nova Chartering) and Mr Arne Olav Hommefoss (C. M. Olsen)*

*Mr Daniel Karstens (JTE), Mr Tor Näsström (Preem) and Mr Ola Nilsson (Monteriva)*

*Mr David Shields (Clarksons), Mr Michael Groves (Clarksons) with Ms Zoe Abbott (Clarksons)*

*Mr Oliver Medri (HMC), Ms Nicole Hildebrand (JTE), Mr Jan Heinze (HMC) with Ms Heidi Berger (JTE) and Mr Morten Kroehnert (Integra)*

*Mr Thomas Anderson (Monteriva), Ms Sara Johansson (Vald Andersons), Mr Bjorn Ivar Nielsen (Bergen Tanker Brokers) and Mr Jonatan Karlström (Ivar Lundh)*

*Retired MD Mr Hugo Finlay said goodbye to his colleagues*

*Mr Ingo Witte (JTE) and Mr Jordi Marti (Iberica Maritima) with Mr Jens Kämmle (Chemtec Chemicals) and Mr Hans-Joachim Dunemann (DOW)*

*Mr Tobias Luethe (DOW) and Ms Anne Tautorat (JTE)*

*Mr Sebastiaan Sparreboom (Eastport), Ms Svenja Grünke (JTE), Mr Kevin Trip (Eastport)*

*Mr Diedrik Järnefelt (Neste), Mr Erik Hartzell (Monteriva) and Mr Kim Harjulin (Navicon Shipping)*

*Mr Nico Casant (Jaegers), Mr Ricardo Soler (Chem Tank), Mr Dennis Hanssen (Jaegers) and Mr Georg Lammers (Solvadis)*

# The "Admiral" ended its life on the Halifax rocks

*As one of the early German Imperial Mail steamers the British-built vessel was sent to East Africa*

Deutsche Ost-Afrika Linien (DOAL) was founded in 1890 by a consortium of Hamburg-based shipowners to connect the German colony of Tanzania with the Reich. To provide financial support for the shipowning company, the government of the Reich signed a ten-year subsidy agreement with DOAL.

When in 1891 the DOAL Reichspost steamer "Kanzler" (2,838 GRT) ran aground on a sandbank in the Rovuma delta, DOAL bought a ship to replace it: steamer "Tosari" from Deutsche Dampfschiffs-Rhederei zu Hamburg which DOAL renamed "Admiral". With 2,285 GRT, the ship was of a similar size and built by shipyard Swan & Hunter in Newcastle the previous year: 91 metres long, 12.5 metres wide, 6.2 metres draught. It was propelled by a triple-expansion steam engine of Wallsend Slipway & Eng. Co. with 1,600 PSi for a speed of 11 knots, consuming 27 to 29 tonnes of coal per day. The steamer was fitted with auxiliary sails on both masts. The crew consisted of 31 men, and there was room for about 50 passengers in three classes. Under its new name "Admiral" and under the funnel colours that Deutsche Afrika-Linien still uses today, the ship under the command of Captain C. G. West started its first African voyage from Hamburg on 11 November 1891. It called at the ports of Rotterdam, Lisbon and Naples – ports where it collected post – and Port Said, Suez, Aden, Tanga, Dar es Salaam, Zanzibar, Lindi and Delagoa Bay (Maputo, Mozambique), and the same way back. The following year the service was extended to include Durban. Scheduled sailing time: three months and five days.

*"Admiral" loading and discharging somewhere on the East African coast*

In the summer of 1893, the "Admiral" undertook a four-week pleasure cruise from Lübeck to Tromsö and Christiansand in Norway – and was thus probably the first cruise ship of modern times. In total, the "Admiral" completed 30 Africa voyages before DOAL sold it to Newfoundland & Halifax SS Co. in 1902, the handover took place in New York. Under its new name "Rosalind" and its home port now Liverpool, it collided with steamer "Seniac" on 1 July 1907 off Georges Island. The "Seniac" sank. In 1912, St. Lawrence Shipping Co, Montreal, took over the vessel. Commanded by the Canadian government, on 15 April 1912, the "Rosalind" was told to leave the port of Halifax to assist the "Titanic". One had assumed that the "Titanic" was still afloat after she had hit the iceberg.

On 13 November 1913, in Sydney/Nova Scotia, the steamer collided with tug boat "Douglas H. Thomas". The tug's five-man crew drowned. Soon after the incident, the ship's name was changed to "City of Sydney", home port Montreal.

On 17 March 1914, the "City of Sydney" ran aground on a voyage from New York to Halifax near Sambro Island, in the entrance to the port of Halifax. Steamer "Rosemary" was the first ship at the site of the accident and took 11 passengers and the majority of the 50-man crew on board. Some stayed behind to see if they could salvage the wreck. However, due to the serious damage it had suffered, it was deemed unsalvageable and later scrapped.

*First row: Joseph Aguilat, Donna Delgado, Pol Haboc, Capt. Josef Stingl, Gerardo Borromeo, Björn Borbe, Nurhuda Hanafiah and Alfred Haboc (l to r)*

# Lectures on safety in Manila

The Pan Pacific Hotel in Manila last 10 to 14 October: With full focus on safety, security, health, the environment and quality the 41 participants from our chemical tanker and dry cargo fleet were updated on the rules and procedures as well as company developments. After intensive and constructive lectures aiming to improve general competence, knowledge and awareness the seminar was closed with an entertaining gala dinner including the traditional company award ceremony.

*Gathering around Philipp von Rantzau for a crew photo on the ship that bears his name*

# "Philipp Essberger", the crew

Here is the correct photo! In the last edition of DAL/JTE News we had mistakenly printed a photo taken on board another vessel. What we really wanted to show was this photo of the crew of the "Philipp Essberger". DAL/JTE News apologises! The right picture was taken on a voyage on the Baltic Sea in which the eponym of the vessel, Philipp von Rantzau, son of Managing Owner Dr Eberhart von Rantzau, took part. We see him, all smiles, in the middle of the photo. Special greetings from DAL/JTE News!

***Seminar in Sudermühlen:*** *Captains and officers of Essberger Tankers met at Hotel Sudermühlen in the countryside for a three-day seminar mainly aimed to improve safety issues. These regularly held events also provide a chance to get to know each other better. The highlight of this seminar was a dinner on 16 October given by Dr Eberhart von Rantzau and his wife Patricia. They both took the opportunity to gather information first-hand in a relaxed atmosphere. On the photo from left to right: 3/O Dominik Kulesza, Cpt Dariusz Swierkosz, Cpt Jose Teixeira, C/E Dmitry Shcherbov, Cpt Grzegorz Klepacki, C/E Vitor Belo, 2/E Sergey Panishev, 2/O Valentin Eriskin, C/E Ryszard Topolewski, C/E Andrzej Sullik, Patricia von Rantzau, Eberhart von Rantzau, C/E Dion Jannink, 2/E Cezary Synak, C/O Marcin Harasim, Cpt Krzysztof Niedzielski, 2/O Dariusz Podsiadly, 2/O Mateusz Borysewicz, C/O Andre Steenberger, Cpt Jan van der Form, 2/O Adrian Kuzmicz, Cpt Cornelis Lodder, 3/E Sietse Dam, C/E Vitaliy Kolesnyk, Cpt Geradus Wijnands*

# A passion for playing with numbers

*Christine Agutu, finance director of United Africa Feeder Line (UAFL) group presents herself*

Kenya has a population of well over 40 million people and Mombasa, which is the country's coastal region and the place that I was born, has a population of well over 1.5 million. But my high school education was in the country's capital, as was my first station in my career in shipping in 2001 back in the day when Spanfreight had an office in Nairobi. I have always been passionate about numbers; those who know me know this. My entire career in various industries and indeed my social positions have always been about numbers. The industries I have worked for range from vehicular assembly, FMCG, the handicrafts sector, and finally shipping. I have also found myself countless times in the positions of treasurer or its equivalent in various social groups.

## Major in finance

It is therefore no surprise that my university education had me major in finance. I am also a CPA. My move to the Spanfreight Mombasa office in late 2002 saw me immediately delve into working for UAFL which was in its "teething stages" at the time. I hold UAFL very close to my heart, having been very actively involved in the company since its inception, when it was just operating a small feeder connecting East Africa to Comoros and Mozambique. I largely attribute my growth in the group to this dynamic company. I was glad to settle back in my place of birth and closer to my family.

## New challenge

In 2008, my family grew to include my first and currently only daughter, and the rapidly growing business posed the new challenge of balancing family life and career. I easily attribute finding my balance to the support of my family and my good fortune of working with a highly qualified and motivated team who have over the years become my family away from family. My growth in the company was steady, and amongst my many highlights, I got the opportunity to attend the budget meeting in our head offices in Mauritius, which was a real eye-opener for me. My promotion to finance manager in 2014 was a huge but welcome opportunity for me to get more intricately involved in all the facets of the group.

The other highlights of my career followed in quick succession – my promotion to group finance director in 2015 and my subsequent promotion to managing director of Spanfreight Shipping Ltd in 2016. Both these positions were a big honour for me and they have expanded my span of management to encompass the group's dynamics as a whole. The group is clearly an equal-opportunity employer and rewards hard work regardless of age and/or gender. My being entrusted with such a crucial portfolio which includes playing a pivotal role in guiding the group through turbulent waters and ensuring the adoption of disciplines necessary for survival in the industry is a clear illustration of this.

I would definitely say that working my way up in the group has put me in the unique position of appreciating the technical as well as macro-issues of the business. It has also made possible a smooth transition from my predecessors who were largely instrumental in my growth in the company. I am largely surrounded by youthful and infectious energy both in our head office and locally, which is very much a plus. This small but ever-dynamic group has curved its niche in adaptability to ever-changing market trends; to understand the numbers, one must understand the business which for me has been both challenging and exciting. Being CFO of a group that boasts seven distinctive companies means you must have your fingers in seven proverbial pies at any given time. All the companies complement each other in one way or another whether it is in the feeder business, the trading business or just understanding the stevedoring company that is situated in a highly political environment.

*Christine Agutu, CFO, mad for numbers and for basketball*

When I am not "playing" with numbers, one may find me amusing myself with my little-known passion which is fashion and interior design and which has now sadly faded in the backdrop of my life as little more than an indulgence. Perhaps it was my height that also contributed to piquing my interest in the game, but back in my younger days, when my knees worked as they should, I was known to play a "mean" game of basketball. I have long stopped playing but still remain an avid fan.

# Whereabouts

December 2016

| Ship's name | Master | First Mate | Chief Engineer |
|---|---|---|---|
| Alcedo | Stephanus Frerichs | Willem Schot | Albertus Knoop |
| Amalie Essberger | Antonio Petinga | Artur Karpowicz | Marek Ptasznik |
| Anneliese Essberger | Peter Troost | Tim Hastir | Gerlof Tijink |
| Ardea | Antonius Nagel | Albertus Konijn | Marten Bosma |
| Caroline Essberger | Thomas Kijzers | Gerben Bosscher | Ronald Van Herwijnen |
| Christian Essberger | Krzysztof Niedzielski | Rafal Garbacz | Zbigniew Biernacki |
| Dutch Aquamarine | Albert Ten Wolde | Chris De Boer | Sipke Steenbergen |
| Dutch Emerald | Nicolaas Bruinsma | Slawomir Narloch | Hendrik Berg |
| Dutch Faith | Adolph Kamphuis | Sander De Bos | Jan Sonneveld |
| Dutch Spirit | Marco Boshuijzen | Roger Oenema | David Roele |
| Eduard Essberger | Boguslaw Gajdowski | Daniel Szarzynski | Lukasz Zeromski |
| Ellen Essberger | Adam Krzyzykowski | Jaroslaw Krok | Herbert Farkas |
| Elsa Essberger | Stefan Grabowski | Pawel Bula | Artur Kazimierz Gzella |
| Georg Essberger | Grzegorz Klepacki | Evgeniy Buzyrev | Andrzej Sullik |
| Johann Essberger | Zarko Boko | Mareks Satkovskis | Ryszard Topolewski |
| Koralia | Yudo Wiropati | Ireneo Ruedas | Dony Merwoto |
| Liesel Essberger | Boguslaw Olbrys | Marcin Madry | Saturnino Yuson |
| Lisa Essberger | Alex Buren | Walter Bergsma | Hendrik Van Schoonhoven |
| Lucy Essberger | Nicky Burger | Krzysztof Maniecki | Johan De Jong |
| Maersk Launceston | Miroslaw Drozewski | Angie Mae Cagud | Piotr Turski |
| Patricia Essberger | Maciej Kaminski | Enrique Lopez | Oleksandr Samusenko |
| Philipp Essberger | Andrei Malenkov | Tomasz Rembisz | Vitor Belo |
| Selinda | Valery Sukhach | Yuriy Poglod | Viorel Florian Stanescu |
| Swakop | Oleksandr Grytsyuta | Andriy Stoyakin | Danut Daniel Oprea |
| UAFL Zanzibar | Rubin Pavlov | Marcelo Borbon | Nicusor Medrihan |
| Ubena | Eduard Grimakovsky | Sergiy Perepelytsya | Andrzej Szyca |
| Ulanga | Konstantin Kveselevich | Vitaly Ochilov | Dmytro Shamonin |
| Ursula Essberger | Nicolaas Van Den Belt | Jakub Nadaj | Marinus Kroon |
| Valbella | Win Thein | Samuel Ruedas | Oleg Burlachenko |
| Wilhelmine Essberger | Hubertus Meulenberg | Antonio Ocampo | Roel Tichelaar |
| Zambesi | Rostislav Kokorev | Oleksandr Glebov | Konstantin Khardin |

# Aus der Reederei-Familie

## Jubiläen

**10 Jahre**

Frau Ann-Cathrin Schürmann,
*Liner Services,*
01.01.2017

Herr Artur Gzella,
*C/E,*
04.01.2017

Herr Daniel Kubacki,
*C/O,*
26.01.2017

Frau Christine Voigts,
*HR Sea,*
01.02.2017

Frau Alexandra Trinkus,
*HR Shore,*
15.02.2017

Frau Suzy Steinke
*Trades,*
26.03.2017

## Besondere Geburtstage

**80 Jahre**

Frau Jutta Schütze, 26.02.2017

**65 Jahre**

Herr Siegfried Kuchar,
*Ops Liner Services,*
17.03.2017

Capt. Boguslaw Gajdowski,
22.03.2017

Frau Gabriele Bartsch,
*Hammonia Reisebüro,*
26.03.2017

**60 Jahre**

Frau Monika Martin-Ayass,
*DALSA Bremen,*
11.02.2017

Herr Casimir Poté,
*Facility Management,*
03.03.2017

**50 Jahre**

Herr Nicusor Florian Medrihan,
*C/E,*
11.01.2017

Capt. Kostiantyn Kharchenko,
30.01.2017

Herr Jan Kegeler,
*Hammonia Reisebüro,*
05.02.2017

Capt. Krzysztof Osuch,
20.02.2017

## Geheiratet hat

Frau Michéle Möller (geb. Tacken),
*DSA Düsseldorf*

## In den Ruhestand treten/traten

Frau Angelika Lindner,
31.12.2016

## Neue Mitarbeiter an Land

Frau Svenja Albrechtsen,
*HR Shore*

Herr Mert Daggecen,
*Shipmanagement*

Herr Julian Fischer,
*Ops Liner Services*

Frau Anna-Lena Meyer,
*HR Sea*

Herr Kai Pahnke,
*Shipmanagement*

Frau Katrin Pooch,
*Accounting*

Frau Isabelle Voß,
*HR Sea*

Frau Katarzyna Walentynowicz,
*HR Sea*



# "Wow! I could not believe it!"

*Cristiane "Sonora" Satya writes in her own charming words how she found the message in a bottle and what she felt*

*The "DAL Kalahari" on the way from Bremerhaven to Cape Town as seen by Rainer Schulze-Smidt in 2010. It was one of his many trips as a passenger*

*Mr Schulze-Smidt with the bottle still full, and Cristiane Satya with the bottle message*

So the history was like that: My real name is Cristiane. Sonora is my artistic name, I'm a photographer and I live in Brazil. So that time when I found the bottle I was camping in Mocambique Beach in the same city where I live: Florianópolis (South of Brazil).

Was holidays for new year and I went for swimming in the morning. That date was 31/12/2011. I was swimming and when I left the sea I saw a bootle a bit far, this beach there is no houses and the sand is empty and clean. Generally you find sticks, sea plants and some plastic bottles sometimes brought by the sea waves. So I saw a green bottle and I thought: Omg, garbage on the beach. I should go there pick it up and dump in the right place. So I went there. When I got the bottle I saw some shells grown around it, and then I saw inside a paper and the bottle was sealed… wooooowww, I couldn't believe that was a message in a bottle, my dream since I was a kid and in a special date… as my birthday is january second. So was a super b-day gift! I was camping with some friends and I wished to keep the bottle entire, because I wish to open it carefully to keep it, because was a marvelous thing to find such a treasure! But my friends insisted and they said: "Don't wait to open at home, open it now! " I said ok, ok! So we broke the bottle inside a plastic bag and we saw the card and the letter. I was really happy and my friends also, everybody was in shock in a positive way about this beautiful moment. So I tried to understand what was in the letter, but I thought could be german language, but I don't speak german, so when I was back home I searched on internet through google translator about what was in the message. And I tried to reach you, sent e-mails, but no answers, but I never forgot because who sent the message obviously wants to know the person who found it. So, when I photograph festivals and in Hungary I met a guy and we became friends. That was my friend who called you. So after 2013 when I met him we kept contact. And one day I had one inside thought: "Why don't I ask for my friend to help me?"

So I sent one whats's app message to him and we spoke about it, and he could reach you. But after that I was travelling, working, meeting my husband, I went to India and so much time travelling. But today I'm here and finally in my home and your letter and the cards is here in my notice board up my desk! Thank you very much for this gift in my live.

*A day to remember at the Weißes Haus: Dr Eberhart von Rantzau, Annette von Rantzau, Ron Frick, Patricia von Rantzau, Heinrich von Rantzau and Philipp von Rantzau; all gentlemen featuring ties striped in DAL funnel colours*

# Goodbye Ron

Ron Frick, managing director of DAL Agency Pty Ltd, has been working for Deutsche Afrika-Linien (DAL) for 45 years. At the end of 2016 he will be retiring. Ron is known as "the face of DAL in South Africa". After saying farewell to his colleagues and customers in South Africa as part of an official reception, he was in Hamburg on 29 November to say goodbye in the DAL head office as well. The von Rantzau family invited him to a festive dinner at the stylish Weißes Haus with a select group of colleagues and friends – a very special form of showing their appreciation for a competent and loyal man.

# "The transport of grapes from Africa is a huge logistical challenge"

*Lars Witte, DAL commercial manager trade SA– Europe– India, tells us how to keep up with demand*

**DAL/JTE NEWS:** The festive season in Europe approaches. Time for fruits from the Cape. However it is a long journey at sea between the Cape of Good Hope and our shopping bags. How does Deutsche Afrika-Linien do it?

**WITTE:** Transporting grapes from South Africa is quite a logistical challenge. Let me give you an example: in Central America, bananas are harvested when they are still green. They are then stowed in reefer containers, where they continue to ripen while at sea until they reach the supermarkets. Grapes, on the other hand, which are crucial for the economy of South Africa and Namibia, can only be picked when they are ripe. Their condition does not improve after they are picked, instead it gradually deteriorates. So it's important to get the grapes to the consumer as fast as possible.

**DAL/JTE NEWS:** How are the grapes transported?

**WITTE:** The grape season starts in November with the harvesting of the grapes grown in the border region between South Africa and Namibia, both sides of the Orange River. Then as the summer in South Africa progresses the farms in various regions further south, where grapes are grown as well, start to harvest their fruit. Straight after the grapes have been picked, they are sorted and packed in the local cold stores where they are stored before they are stuffed in reefer containers and then transported to Cape Town by truck.

On arrival at the container terminal they are stacked in special areas and each container is connected to a local power supply. The containers are then loaded within 48 hours onto a waiting container ship such as the "DAL Karoo", which has 1,176 reefer plugs. Quite a large number of containers are even delivered to the container terminal when the vessel is actually being loaded. The voyage to Rotterdam takes 15 days and London Gateway 17 days. During the voyage north the grapes are kept at a constant temperature of –0.5 C°. Two to three days after discharge in Europe the grapes are in the supermarkets.

**DAL/JTE NEWS:** This is a very tight "just in time" schedule over such a long distance.

**WITTE:** The whole logistic cold chain is time critical. It is essential that especially grape containers are loaded on the weekly sailings as fast as possible and no cargo is held over to the next sailing. Proper planning is the key factor. To achieve this requirement the DAL Agency colleagues stay in close contact with growers and exporters in order to anticipate the weekly cargo flows and their container requirements. There are many factors that influence the harvesting, in particular the weather. Unfortunately the grape season coincides with a period of very strong winds. Sometimes wind stoppages can extend for long periods and create excessive congestion in the port, which can delay vessel departures and disruptions to the sailing schedules. Even if the vessels leave Cape Town many days behind schedule together with our partners in SAECS we always try to get the vessels back on schedule on arrival in Europe so that the fruit arrives in the markets on time and in prime condition.

**DAL/JTE NEWS:** Other than grapes what other products do we carry in reefer containers and how important is the reefer business for DAL?

**WITTE:** Northbound from South Africa the focus is on all types of perishable fruits. After grapes there are the stone fruits, i.e. plums and peaches followed by apples and pears, then all the different types of citrus fruits such as oranges, lemons and grapefruits. The citrus fruit season from June to October brings the largest volumes of all fruits. In addition we also carry fish, flower bulbs, vegetables as well as chilled and frozen meat from Namibia and Botswana. Southbound to South Africa, the reefer cargo consists of meat, chicken and a wide range of other deep-frozen foodstuffs, for example pre-sliced potatoes for chips. We also carry pharmaceutical products which need to be temperature-controlled. However the volumes southbound do not compare with the volumes of northbound reefer cargo.

That's why many reefer containers have to be returned to South Africa empty. Reefer containers are an important part of the total northbound cargo volume. That's why we're constantly investing in new equipment. Costing up to 20,000 dollars, a 40-foot reefer container is a substantial investment and is equivalent to six times the cost of a standard container. The transport of such time-sensitive commodities also requires an organisation which can be flexible and adjust to meet our clients' differing requirements. This we believe is one of our strengths enabling us to provide a quality service for big and small exporters.

**DAL/JTE NEWS:** What is the main season for fruit?

**WITTE:** Basically, we carry fresh fruits all year round. The season starts in November with the early grapes which have to arrive in Europe for the festive season and then continues the rest of the year with all the other different types of fruit all the way into mid-autumn. After the 15 October all South African citrus fruit landed in the EU attracts a duty of 16%, which makes it more difficult for South African exporters to sell their fruit competitively in Europe. Therefore from the end of September until mid-November there are limited shipments of fruit until the new fruit season starts, whereas fish and meat are transported all year round. South Africa is geographically a big country covering different climate zones. Therefore the various types of deciduous and citrus fruits can be cultivated in different parts of the country with different growing seasons.

This means, depending on the fruit and the season, that the reefer exports move through all three South African main ports. Whereas Cape Town is the main port for grapes and deciduous fruits such as apples, the ports of Durban and to a much lesser extent Port Elizabeth are the main ports for citrus fruit exports.

**DAL/JTE NEWS:** What is the general trend in the fruit business with South Africa?

**WITTE:** In the past, 80 per cent of South Africa's produce was sold into the EU. Due to various reasons but mainly CBS (citrus black spot – a harmless fungus on the outside skin of citrus fruits), South Africa was looking to further develop other markets to lessen the dependency on Europe as the main trading partner for South African citrus fruits. Meanwhile only 60 per cent of the South African fruit is finding its way into Europe. For a line operating mainly between South Africa and Europe this obviously bears some risk. The decision of the UK to leave the EU ("Brexit") might have been received with mixed feelings in Europe, but for South Africa it could be advantageous for the country's fruit exports into the UK. This however will depend on whether the UK plant health regulations will be changed from those applicable in the EU. Only time will tell.

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